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UCSF Employee Accidents and What Causes Them

Back injuries among nurses represent the most costly single type of employee accident here and in hospitals generally, according to Edward Mayberry, Occupational Risk Coordinator, UCSF Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

"This type of injury, most often caused by physically lifting patients, accounts for 30 percent of our total cost of employee injuries in terms of Workmen's Compensation (insured cost), other uninsured costs, loss of time from the job, etc. Back injuries resulting from the manual lifting of patients account for 52 percent of the cost—and about 14 percent of the cause—of all injuries sustained by Nursing Service personnel on the UCSF campus," says Mr. Mayberry. His statistics are compiled from injury reports submitted by the various campus departments.

In an effort to alleviate the problem, Mr. Mayberry has been investigating the experience of other California hospitals in preventing back injuries among nurses.

The installation of mechanical patient lifting equipment is one means of reducing the hazard of back injuries, and the use of "lifting teams" made up of specially selected and trained employees is another.

"I believe a combination of these methods is needed and, hopefully, we will be instituting some pilot projects soon to test their effectiveness," says the Occupational Risk Coordinator.

"Lifting, plus slips and falls, incidentally, are the most costly causes of accidents in all industries," he adds.

Although it occurs with less frequency, infectious hepatitis is the second most costly employee hazard here—again in terms of the expense of the illness and time lost. Hepatitis accounts for only a moderate percentage of all employee injuries at UCSF.

Of the needle puncture cases reported, approximately one-third result during the course of patient treatment, one-third from contact with the contaminated needle after injection, and another one-third occur among non-medical or technical personnel (such as custodians, laundry personnel, etc.) who come in contact with contaminated needles which have not been disposed of properly.

All personnel who might be exposed to hepatitis have, of course, been made aware of the danger and are instructed in the need to observe every possible precaution.

In spite of the concern over hepatitis, a hospital employee's risk of contracting infectious diseases in general is surprisingly low, according to Frank A. Gohr, Doctor of Public Health and Associate Administrator of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. It accounts for only about 1 percent of the total causes of injuries, ranking below such hazards as being struck by or struck against objects, being caught between objects, or suffering cuts, burns or the effects of foreign bodies.

As a result of studies made over many years, Dr. Gohr has come to an interesting conclusion: Once a person is injured in a specific type of accident, he is unlikely

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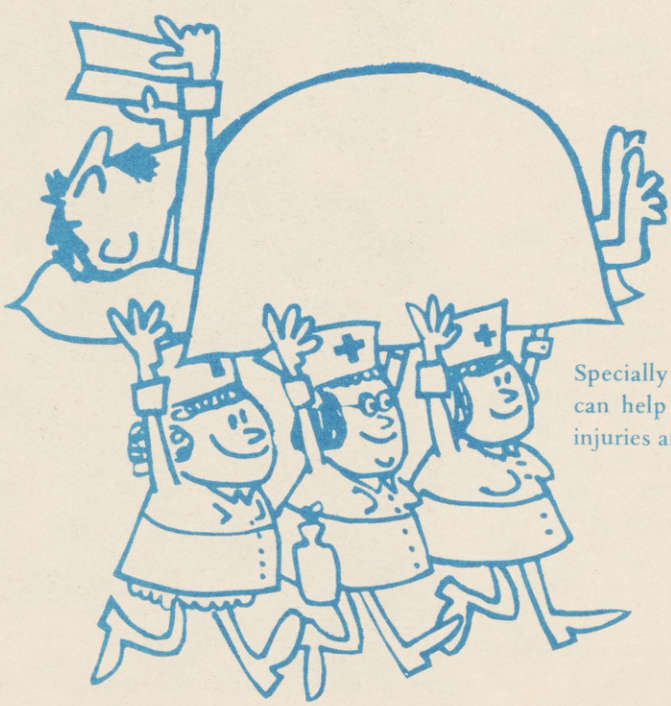

Specially trained "lifting teams" can help reduce the rate of back injuries among nurses.

Drawing courtesy of Argonaut Insurance Co.

RADIOLOGY

Computerized Reporting Speeds Diagnosis

A computerized reporting system, now in daily use, is increasing the efficiency of diagnostic examinations in the UCSF Department of Radiology.

The system, called the Raport Radiological Reporting System, works like this: A patient—let's call her Mary Smith—is scheduled for X-rays of the spine. The receptionist enters Mrs. Smith's name, patient identification number, and the type of examination requested on a special form printed with diagrams and information charts relating to the spinal cord. This form, called a mark-sense form, is one of a series especially developed for the system and representing every segment of the body.

The patient information also is typed into an input module and the information flashes on the screen so that it may be checked for accuracy before it is transmitted into the control unit for holding.

Now Mrs. Smith's X-rays are taken. The films are delivered to the radiologist who examines them and transfers the findings to the mark-sense form by marking appropriate areas with a pencil. These pencil marks represent such data as the location and pathology of abnormalities, progress of healing, degenerative changes —and more.

The completed form is placed on a desk-top scanner, which "reads" the information in eight seconds, converts the symbols into complete concepts, and sends it to the copy module.

At the touch of a button, the report is automatically typed on a roll of paper in complete, fully structured sentences incorporating all the information that has been fed into the system relating to Mrs. Smith. (If needed, additional dictated information can be typed into the input module, combined with the data on the mark-sense form, and incorporated by the computer in the final print-out.)

The end result resembles any regular, typed medical report prepared from dictation, but the system does it better—and faster.

The data processing equipment, which is linked by telephone line to a central

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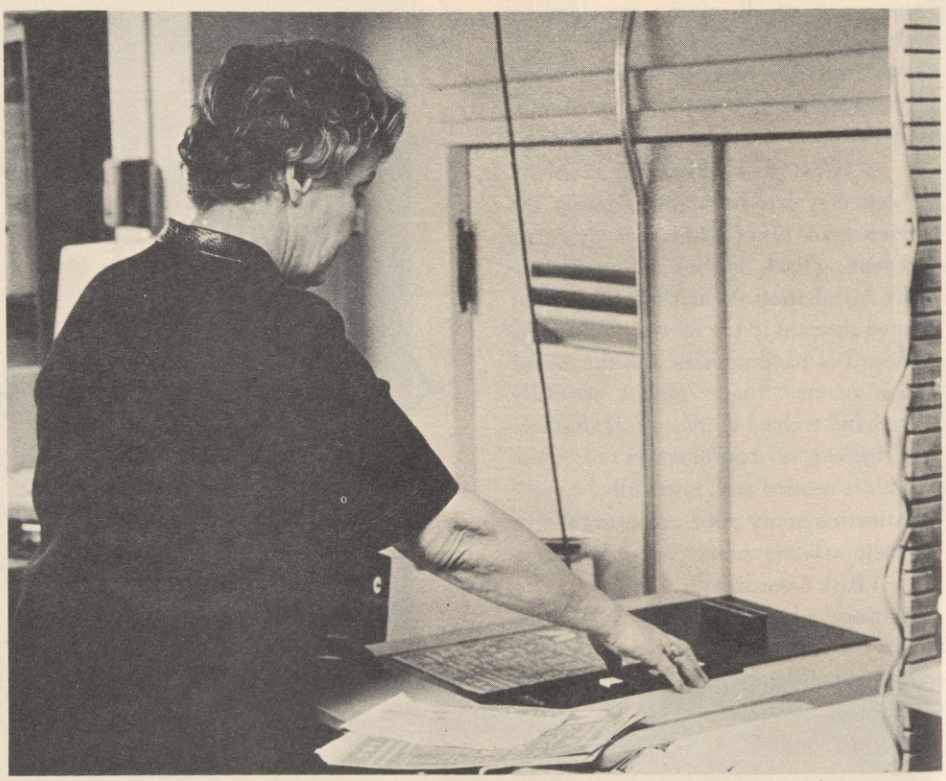
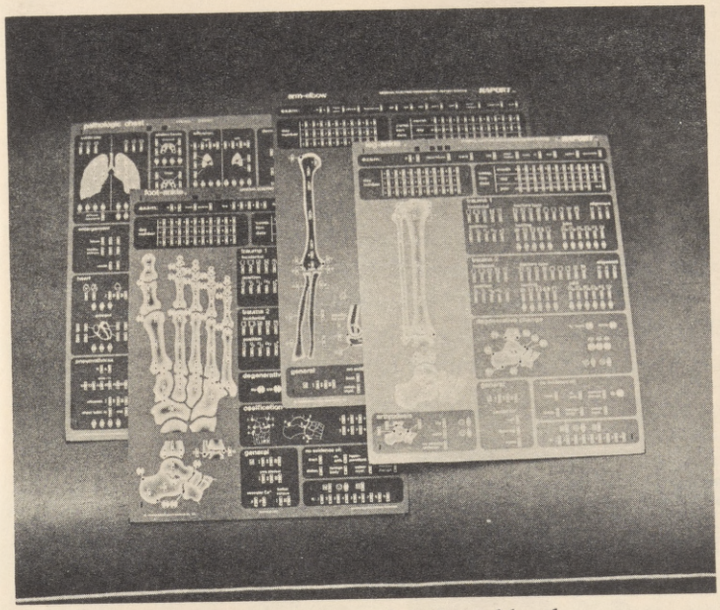
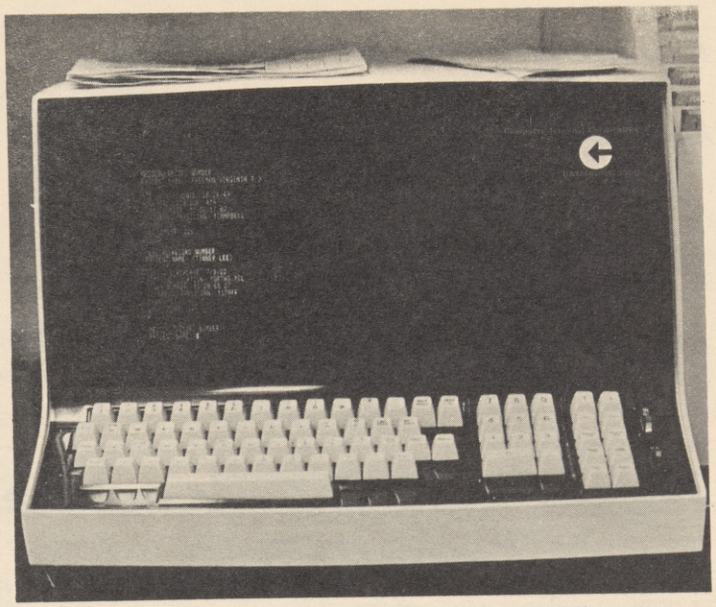
Virginia Voigt types patient information into input module.



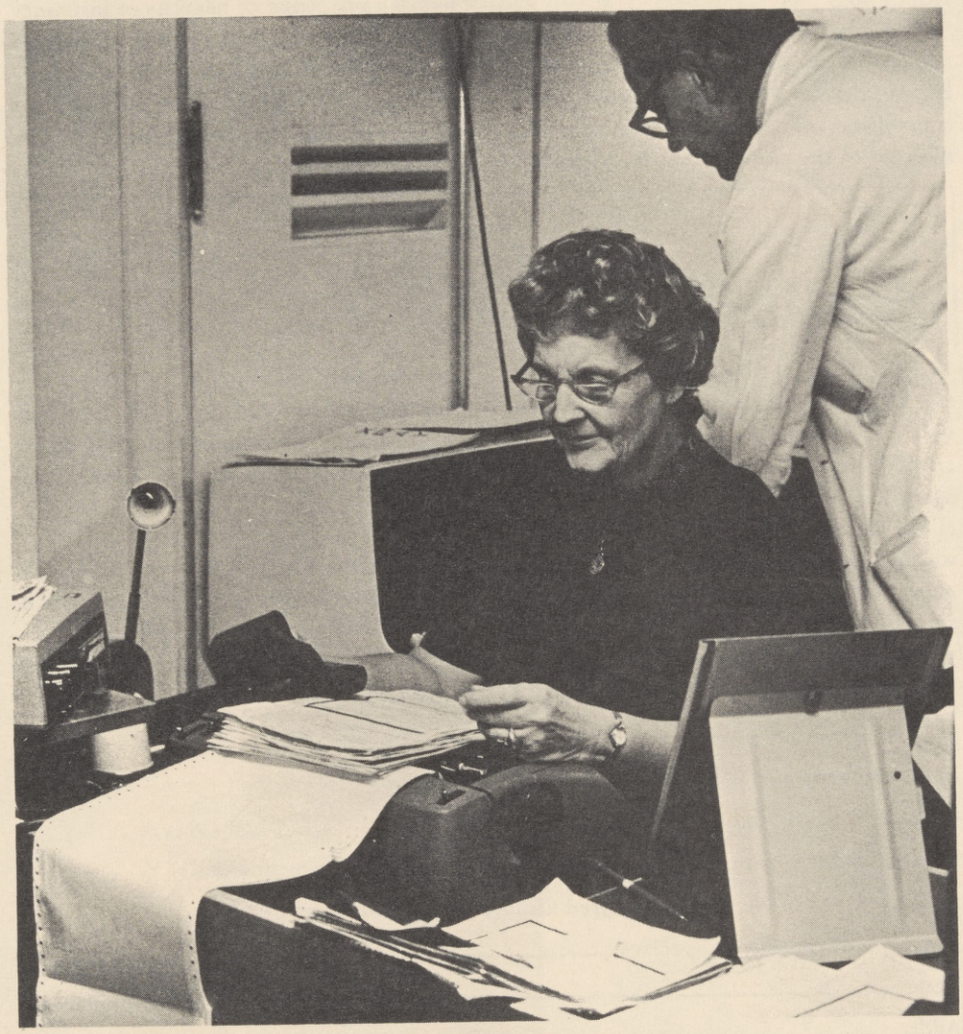
Lela McMahon places the special form on desk-top scanner.



X-ray findings are marked on special forms like these.



Patient information shows on screen of input module.



The symbols on the forms have been converted by the computer into structured sentences which are automatically typed on the copy module. Now Lela McMahon checks the print-out against other information. If necessary, she may add data by typing it into the input module. Dr. Malcolm Jones, Vice-Chairman, Radiology Department, appears in background.

REPORTING SYSTEM

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computer in Albany, Calif., has a capability of handling up to 200 reports daily, says John McCartney, Department of Radiology Business Manager.

The UCSF system is presently turning out between 100 and 130 reports daily, but this will be increased when it is installed in the new Clinics Building, with terminals on each of the eight clinic floors.

Purpose of the Radiological Reporting System is to facilitate the day-by-day diagnostic routine and data is removed from the computer at the end of each day. The printed reports may, however, be stored permanently.

SAFETY

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to be injured again in the same type of accident.

"Apparently we learn from our mistakes, once we have made them," he says. Obviously, we need to do a better job of educating our employees to avoid mistakes in the first place!"

MANUEL ESTRADA INTERVIEWED

Manuel Estrada, Director of Housekeeping Services, was interviewed by Hospital Housekeeping (The International Journal for Health Care Facility Housekeepers) and his remarks were published in a recent article entitled, "Preparing the Housekeeping Budget."

Auxiliary Funds Major Projects

The Board of Directors of the UCSF Hospitals Auxiliary recently approved the expenditure of approximately $24,500 for the following purchases:

An ultra-sonic sound unit to be installed in the Radiology Department. This $18,000 diagnostic instrument, which will be available for use by all services, will enable physicians to use sound waves rather than X-rays to diagnose various soft-tissue conditions and abnormalities in patients. It will be especially useful in examining pregnant women to determine the position and maturation of the fetus.

A new cardiac monitor for the Emergency Room. The $4,000 monitor will aid lifesaving procedures for emergency patients brought to the Hospital in cardiac distress.

Complete refurnishing of Moffitt Hospital's Tenth Floor solarium. This project will cost about $2,500. The area is used by ambulatory patients involved in the "patient self-care" program, and gets heavy use. This will be the third solarium refurnished by the Auxiliary; others are on the ninth and eleventh floors.

Support the Gift Shop

For Valentine gifts, shop *first* at the UCSF Hospitals Auxiliary's Gift Shop in the lobby of Moffitt Hospital. Deluxe satin and lace boxes of Valentine candies, novelty toys, and many other beautiful and appropriate gifts are available. The Gift Shop helps to support the Auxiliary's projects.

Director Heads Committee

Robert A. Derzon, Director, Hospitals and Clinics, has been appointed by the Association of American Medical Colleges as Chairman of an ad hoc committee formed to assist the Social Security Administration in reviewing guidelines for professional fee payments in the teaching setting under Medicare.

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** SYNERGY: "Cooperative action; working together. . ."*

Legal Health Clinic Opens

A Legal Health Clinic has been established at 1486 Fifth Avenue and is open to UCSF patients, staff, faculty and students Monday through Friday from 1 to 5 p.m.

The clinic, a joint venture of Hastings College of the Law and UCSF, is staffed by third-year Hastings students under supervision of their professor and the director of the clinic, James R. Nielsen.

They are prepared to provide counseling on general civil matters, especially those involving the delivery of health care, such as indigent eligibility for financial aid, scope of benefits of insurance health plans, patients' rights of privacy and consent, drug liability, etc.

Those wishing assistance may call the Legal Health Clinic, 666-1341, or drop in during office hours.

Love Is Giving

Love is giving. Your Valentine gift to the UCSF Hospitals and Clinics can provide a toy to make a sick child smile ... or crutches to help a needy amputee to walk again ... or transportation for a frail clinic patient. It can brighten a cheerless waiting area, or it can help to meet many, many other needs for which no other source of funds is available.

Please use the coupon to share your "gift of love." It may be made purely for the personal satisfaction of giving, or you may choose to make it in the name of a patient, as a memorial gift, or to honor a friend, physician, or member of the staff.

Check the category of your choice and use a separate sheet to list names and addresses of persons you wish to honor. They will receive prompt acknowledgment of your thoughtfulness.

Enclosed is my gift to the UCSF Hospitals and Clinics

$ ___ Unrestricted: UC Hospitals Memorial Fund

$ ___ Modernization-Improvement: UC Hospitals Improvement Fund

$ ___ Care for Needy Hospitalized Children: Pediatrics Care Fund

$ ___ Other: (Please Specify) _____

Your name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Mail to Robert A. Derzon, Director, Hospitals and Clinics, Room 119-M, University of California, San Francisco, San Francisco, CA 94122. Checks should be made payable to "The Regents of the University of California."